

CHAPTER II

PUNCTUATION MARKS AND ERRORS

IN LANGUAGE LEARNING

A. Punctuation Marks

1. Definition

According to The New Encyclopedia Britannica, The word *punctuation* is derived from the Latin *punctus* which is in English translated into *point*.¹ Briefly, punctuation is described as the use of spacing, conventional signs and certain typological devices as aids to the understanding and correct reading, either silent or aloud, of handwritten and printed text.² It is also defined as the act or art of pointing sentence with comma, semicolon and other marks.³

The word *punctuation* in Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary is a noun from the verb *punctuate* which means "to divide writing into sentence, phrases, etc by using special marks, e.g. full stop, question mark, etc". Hence, it can be defined as the action or system of punctuating.⁴

Punctuation mark is also defined as any of the marks that are used to punctuate writing.⁵ Punctuation mark is also known as the mark which is used to clarify meaning by indicating separation of words into sentences, clauses and phrases.⁶

Based on the explanations above, it can be concluded that punctuation mark is the use of any marks in writing to clarify meaning by indicating separation of words into sentences, clauses and phrases.

¹The University of Chicago, *The New Encyclopedia Britannica: Knowledge in Depth*, Vol. 15, (USA: Encyclopedia Britannica Inc., 1982), 15th Ed., p. 274.

²*Ibid.*

³C. Ralph Taylor, *Webster's World University Dictionary: Illustrated Encyclopedic Edition*, (USA: Publisher Company Inc., 1965), p. 793.

⁴A S Hornby, *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*, (Oxford University Press, 1995), 5th Ed., p. 941.

⁵*Ibid.*

⁶Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, "Punctuation", <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/punctuation>, cited on August 14, 2009.

2. Function

Throughout its history, punctuation has been employed for varying purpose such as: for elocutionary and for syntactic functions. In its elocutionary function, punctuation serves as a set of instructions for reading a text aloud as it is one aspect of written speech and a kind of phonetic transcription for prosody (stress, pause, and intonation). In its syntactic function, punctuation serves, like other aspects of orthography, to convey meaning. It does so by identifying lexical elements and clausal, phrasal, and sentential structure.⁷

We speak English with sound level variations, tone of voice changes, rate changes, and various facial expressions. Body gesture and hand activity may contribute to comprehension of the spoken word. Punctuation is, in part, an attempt to capture in writing the emphasis we are able to deliver orally. Additionally, punctuation is a tool we use to organize word arrangements to facilitate readability.⁸ The use of punctuation should be accurate when we intend to provide information, the use of inappropriate punctuation marks will make people hard to read and understand our writing. The presence of punctuation marks help us to write down our language easily in order to be well-understood by others.

3. Types of Punctuation Marks

a. Full Stop or Period (.)

A full stop or period (sometimes stop, full point, or dot) is the punctuation mark that is commonly placed at the end of several different types of sentences in English and many other languages. A full stop consists of a small dot placed at the end of a line of text, such as at the end of the sentence.⁹ It is usually used for:

⁷Robert J. Scholes and Brenda J. Willis, "Prosodic and Syntactic Functions of Punctuation: A Contribution to The Study of Orality and Literacy", <http://www.springerlink.com/content/0107276842q/?>, cited on July 12, 2009.

⁸Beida, "Punctuation", <http://www.iscribe.org/english/punc.html>, cited on July 12, 2009.

⁹Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, "Full Stop", http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/full_stop, cited on August 14, 2009.

- 1) indicating complete sentence or thought, e.g. *Musthofa is a cheerful boy.*,
- 2) abbreviating, for example: *Suryono, M. Ag,* and
- 3) separating numbers in mathematics and time, for example: *10.5 meters* and *10.45 am.*¹⁰

From the explanation, we can conclude that a full stop can be used to indicate complete sentence, abbreviation and separate numbers in mathematics and time.

b. Question Mark (?)

A question mark is the mark that placed in the end of interrogative sentence. Some examples related to question mark are:

- 1) *Who are you?*
- 2) *Do you know my name?*¹¹

A question mark also can be used with the date to express doubt, e.g. *John Marston (? 1575-1634).*¹² In addition to the use of a question mark, it is not used at the end of an indirect question, for instance, *He asked why I come late.*¹³ However, a question mark can be placed within the quotation mark in a direct question, e.g. “*Why you must be so unreasonable?*” *she asked.*¹⁴

The importance of a question mark is to indicate a question in a sentence, a misused application of a question mark will influence readers’ understanding toward our writing.

¹⁰Hotbend D. Lingga and Lim Ali Utomo, *Intisari Tata Bahasa Inggris Kontemporer*, (Jakarta: Kesaint Blanc, 2005), 2nd Ed., p. 612.

¹¹A S Hornby, *op.cit.*, p. 1402.

¹²*Ibid.*

¹³*Ibid.*

¹⁴Marcella Frank, *Modern English: A Practical Reference Guide*, (USA: Prentice Hall Inc., 1972), p. 302.

c. Comma (,)

The comma is a valuable, useful punctuation device because it separates the structural elements of sentences into manageable segments.¹⁵ The use of comma can be explained as follows:

1) Introducers

A comma is used after introductory words, phrases and clauses. Some examples related to this case are:

- a) Words : *However, the new law was largely ignored by the public.*
- b) Phrases : *After a long vacation, he returned to work.*
- c) Clauses : *Because he had missed so many classes, he had to drop the course.*
- d) Appositives : *An old man, my grandfather can barely work.*¹⁶

2) Coordinators

A comma is used between two independent clauses which is joined by the coordinating conjunctions *and, but, yet, or, for, and so* to form compound sentences. Below is some examples of a comma as coordinators:

- a) *The exam was quite easy, but most students failed.*
- b) *The exam was quite easy, and most students failed.*¹⁷

3) Inserters

A comma is used before and after words, phrases and clauses that are inserted into the middle of main clause. The examples related to it as follow:

- a) Transition : *The students, on the other hand, felt that the test was unfair.*
- b) Appositives: *My grandfather, an old man, can barely walk.*¹⁸

¹⁵Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, "Comma", <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/comma> (punctuation), cited on August 14, 2009.

¹⁶Alice Oshima and Ann Hogue, *Writing Academic English: A Writing and Sentence Structure Work Book for International Students*, (Reading: Adison Wesley Publishing Company, t.t.), p. 229.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, p. 230.

4) Linkers

A comma is also used to:

- a) add words and phrases at the end of a sentence, e.g. *The students felt that the test was unfair, of course.,*
- b) link items in a series, e.g. *A nurse has to be willing to work at night, on weekends and on holiday.*¹⁹

From the description, we can draw a conclusion that the main function of a comma is to separate the structural elements of sentences into manageable and segments in order to be well-understood by readers.

d. Exclamation Mark (!)

An exclamation mark or exclamation point is a punctuation mark that is usually used after an interjection or exclamation to indicate strong feelings, anger, pain, command, wonder or high tone voice, and often placed at the end of a sentence. But it can be put in the mid of the sentence and its function like a comma. The following is the example deals with the use of exclamation mark:

- 1) *Ouch!*
- 2) *That's great!*
- 3) *There was a loud bang! at the door.* (in the mid of the sentence).²⁰

In informal written English, more than one exclamation mark, or an exclamation mark and question mark, may be used. It can be exemplified as follow:

Anton : Your wife's just given birth to triplets.

*Andi :Triplets!?*²¹

The main function of an exclamation mark, as explained above, is to indicate strong feelings, anger, pain, command, wonder or high

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 231.

²⁰ Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, "Exclamation Mark", http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/exclamation_mark, cited on August 14, 2009.

²¹ A S Hornby, *loc.cit.*

tone voice. It is often placed at the end of a sentence though sometimes it's in the mid of a sentence.

e. Quotation Mark or Inverted Comma (“ ” or ‘ ’)

A Single quotation mark or inverted commas are generally used in British English, i.e. *'Help! I'm drowning'*.²²

In American English, a double quotation mark is used, e.g. *"Help, I'm Drowning"*.²³

Briefly, the use of a quotation mark as follow:

- 1) To enclose words and punctuation in direct speech, e.g. *"Why on earth did you do that?" he asked. "Because I dislike you" he replied.*
- 2) To draw attention to a word that is unusual for the context, for example a slang expression, or a word that is used for a special effect, such as irony, e.g. *He told me in no uncertain terms to "get lost" and Thousands were imprisoned in the name of "national security"*.
- 3) To enclose the titles of articles, books, poems, plays, etc., e.g. *I was watching "The Day After Tomorrow"*.
- 4) Around short quotations or sayings, i.e. *Do you know the origin of the saying: "Slow but sure"?²⁴*

The use of quotation marks must be consistent. When we use a single quotation mark, we must use it consistently and so does a double quotation mark.

f. Colon (:)

A colon informs the reader to what follow a proof and explanation, or simply enumerates elements of what is referred to before.

A colon is used for the following matters:

²²A S Hornby, *op.cit.*, p. 1403.

²³*Ibid.*

²⁴*Ibid.*

- 1) Introduction of a definition, i.e. *A: the first letter in the Latin alphabet.*
- 2) Separation of the chapter and the verse number(s) indication in many references to religious scriptures, and also epic poems; it was also used for chapter numbers in roman numerals, for instance, *The Qur'an, Sura 5:18.*
- 3) Separation of hours, minutes and seconds when reporting the time of day. The examples can be described as follow:
 - a) *The concert finished at 23:45.*
 - b) *This file was last modified today at 11:15:05.*
- 4) Separation of a title and the corresponding subtitle, i.e. *Star Wars Episode IV: A New Hope.*²⁵
- 5) We use colon for introducing citation, i.e. *Shakespeare says: "discretion is the better part of valour".*²⁶
- 6) We use colon to separate two clauses which express consensus without any conjunction. An example related to it such as *Man proposes: God disposes.*²⁷

g. Semi colon (;)

The uses of the semicolon in English can be explained briefly as follow:

- 1) It is used between closely related independent clauses which is not conjoined with a coordinating conjunction, i.e. *I went to the swimming pool; I was told it was closed for routine barnacle husking.*
- 2) It is used between independent clauses which are linked with a transitional phrase or a conjunctive adverb, e.g. *Several European countries established colonies in the New World during the sixteenth*

²⁵Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, "Colon", [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colon_\(punctuation\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colon_(punctuation)), cited on August 14, 2009.

²⁶Hotbend D. Lingga and Lim Ali Utomo, *op.cit.*, p. 620.

²⁷*Ibid.*

*century; however, by the middle of the present century, the influences of those colonies started to disappear.*²⁸

- 3) It is also used between items in a series that is containing internal punctuation, i.e. *There are several Waffle Houses in Atlanta, Georgia; Greenville, South Carolina; Gainesville, Florida; and Mobile, Alabama.*
- 4) To separate independent clauses which are conjoined with coordinating conjunctions, when the clauses have internal commas that might be misread, e.g. *After the game, I won a red and blue pinwheel, four hundred thousand edible ingots, a dozen frozen roses, and a certificate of excellence; but when the storm came, I lost it all in a torrent of sleet, snow, and profanity.*²⁹

We must pay attention on the use of a colon and a semicolon since we sometimes regard that both of colon and semi colon is the same in its use function. Whereas, both of them are quite different.

h. Dash (—)

A dash is a punctuation mark. It is longer than a hyphen and is used differently. The use of dash as follow:

- 1) To indicate the change of thought which happened spontaneously, e.g.
 - a) *Mr. Andi is — it's better not to say that Mr. Andi...*
 - b) *If only I had married him, we could be happy now — but why do I think off all about it now?*
- 2) To emphasize a word or phrase at the end of a sentence, e.g. *After he had resided at college for five years and left him—his blessing.*
- 3) To unify some separated object, e.g. *You, he, and I—we are all to be responsible for the mishap.*³⁰

²⁸Eugene Ehrlich, *Schaum Outlines of Theory and Problems of Punctuation, Capitalization and Spelling*, (USA: Scahum's Outline Series of McGraw-Hill Companies, 1992), 2nd Ed., p. 49.

²⁹Alice Oshima, *op.cit.*, p. 233.

³⁰Hotbend D. Lingga and Lim Ali Utomo, *op.cit.*, p. 622.

i. Hyphen (-)

Nearly the same with dashes, hyphen is shorter than dashes, it is generally functioned for unifying some words into one word. Some examples related to hyphen such as *brother in law (brother-in-law)*, *twenty five (twenty-five)*.³¹

We must be able to differentiate the function of a dash and a hyphen in order to be better of composing our ideas in a written form.

j. Stroke/Slash (/)

The slash (/) is a punctuation mark. It is also called a virgule, diagonal, stroke, forward slash, oblique dash, slant, scratch comma. The use of slash can be defined as follows:

- 1) The slash is often used, perhaps incorrectly, to separate the letters in a two-letter initials such as *R/C* (short for *radio control*) or *w/o* (*without*). Purists strongly discourage this newer use of the symbol. However, since other uses of the slash with individual characters are highly context-specific, confusion is not likely to arise. Other examples include *b/w* (*between* or, sometimes, *black and white*), *w/e* (*whatever*, also *weekend* or *week ending*), *i/o* (*input-output*), and *r/w* (*read-write*).
- 2) The slash is also used in some abbreviations such as *w/* (*with*).
- 3) There are usually no spaces on either side of a slash or virgule, for example: *Our New Zealand / Western Australia trip*.
- 4) The slash is also used to avoid taking a position in a naming controversy, allowing the juxtaposition of both names without stating a preference. An example is the designation "*Assyrian/Chaldean/Syriac*" in the official US census, reflecting the *Syriac* naming dispute. The Swedish census has come to a similar solution, using *Assyrier/Syrianer* to refer to the same ethnic group.
- 5) The stroke also use in arithmetic such as "¹²³/₄₅₆".

³¹*Ibid.*, p. 623.

- 6) A slash followed by a dash is used to denote the conclusion of currency, i.e. on a check or a hand-written invoice, somebody may write \$50/- to denote the end of the currency. This keeps anybody from adding further digits to the end of the currency.
- 7) A slash also used in a computer science; on unix-like systems and in URLs, the slash is to separate directory and file components of a path, e.g. `pictures/image.jpg`, `http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Slash_(punctuation)`.
- 8) A leading slash represents the root directory of the virtual file system; it is used when specifying absolute paths, i.e. `/home/john/pictures/image.jpeg`.
- 9) It also used in writing certain shorthand date formats. For example *9/16/2003* (in United States usage) or in most other countries *16/9/2003* or *September 16, 2003* or *16 September 2008* (in Indonesia). In Britain there was a specialized use in prose: *7/8 May* referred to the night which starts the evening of 7 May and ends the morning of 8 May, totally about 12 hours depending on the season.³²

As one of the valuable punctuation marks in writing, the use of slash is nearly the same with a comma and a full stop because it separates part of elements in a sentence to specify its meaning like it was explained above.

k. Omission Mark or Ellipsis (...)

Ellipsis is a mark that consists of three spaced periods (...) or four spaced periods (....). It is used most often to indicate an incomplete presentation of information. Question marks and exclamation points sometimes are combined with ellipsis (? ... and ! ...). An example related to it is *The men were astonished at what had happened and*

³²Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, "Stroke/Slash", [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/slash_\(punctuation\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/slash_(punctuation)), cited on August 14, 2009.

exclaimed, “What sort man is this?...”. (if the question mark is omitted, the meaning of the quotation would be obscured).³³

An ellipsis can also be used to indicate a pause in speech, an unfinished thought or, at the end of a sentence, a trailing off into silence (aposiopesis), for instance, *We usually write ... and ... on a piece of paper.*³⁴

From the description, we can conclude that an ellipsis is often used to indicate an incomplete presentation of information and a pause in speech or a trailing off into silence.

1. Parentheses and Square Brackets { () and [] }

Parentheses are usually used for the following matters:

- 1) To identify a phrase, a clause or a sentence in a sentence which grammatically is not included in main sentence, for example: *The man in black (I think you have met him) is my brother.*³⁵
- 2) To enclose cross references, for example:
*This moral ambiguity is a feature of Shakespeare’s later works (see Chapter eight).*³⁶
- 3) Around number or letter in text, for example:
*Our objectives are (1) to increase output, (2) to improve quality, and (3) to maximize profits.*³⁷

The square brackets [] are used:

- 1) To enclose editorial comment, for example:
A notice reading “everything to be put away in it’s [sic] proper place after using conatant references in her diary to Mr. G [ladstone]’s visit.”
- 2) Around words which are inserted to make a quotation grammatically correct, e.g. *Britain in [these] years was without...*³⁸

³³Eugene Ehrlich, *op.cit.*, p. 102.

³⁴*Ibid.*

³⁵Hotbend D. Lingga and Lim Ali Utomo, *op.cit.*, p. 622.

³⁶A S Hornby, *op.cit.*, p. 1403.

³⁷*Ibid.*

³⁸*Ibid.*

The use of parentheses and square brackets must be consistent as the use of a single or double quotation mark.

m. Apostrophe (')

The apostrophe is used:

- 1) with s to indicate that thing or person belongs to somebody, i.e. *My friend's brother* and *The students' books*,
- 2) in short forms, to indicate that letters or figures have been omitted, i.e. *I'm* (*I am*) and *The summer of '89* (1989),
- 3) with s to form the plural of a letter, a figure or an abbreviation, e.g. *During the 1990's* and *MP's in favor of the motion*.³⁹

From the explanation we can summarize that the apostrophe is used to indicate a possessive, a omitted letters or figures and abbreviation.

n. Capital Letter

Capital letter must be applied in the following matters:

- 1) In the first word of a sentence, we must use capital letter.⁴⁰
- 2) In the first word of every line of conventional poetry, such as:

*One impulse from a vernal wood,
May teach you more of man,
Of moral evil and good,
Than all the sages can.*

— William Wordsworth.⁴¹

- 3) The word I and O should be capitalized. Here is the example:
 - a) *He and I are going to the party together.*
 - b) *Hear me, O Israel.*⁴²
- 4) Names of the proper noun and adjective, for example:
 - a) *Frank meets Lucy for dinner (Frank and Lucy are proper noun).*

³⁹ A S Hornby, *op.cit.*, p. 1402.

⁴⁰ Eugene Ehrlich, *op.cit.*, p. 105.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 106.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 107.

- b) *The baby was delivered by Cesarean section (Cesarean is a proper adjective which is derived from Julius Caesar).*⁴³
- 5) Particles of the following classification:
- a) American family names that begin with the particles *Van, Von, De, Du, Di, or Da*. Here is the example: *One of the best engineers that I know in Connecticut is Paul Von Hardenburgh (An American name).*⁴⁴
- b) Foreign Family outside from America does not capitalize letter of the particle that is provided above, such as: Dutch, German, Italian and Spanish, e.g: *Do you know the works of Pietro di Donato?* (An Italian name).⁴⁵
- 6) Geographical names, for instance:
- a) *We are going to Mississippi river.*
- b) *It's what we call by Atlantic Ocean.*⁴⁶
- 7) Compass Directions are capitalized when they are part of the name of specific regions. We do not capitalize east, west, north, and so on when the merely indicate directions.
- An old song that is referred to the region just a little bit south (it merely indicates direction) of South Carolina (it is a part of specific regions).*⁴⁷
- 8) The names and nicknames of geographic regions and political units are capitalized, for instance: *Mystery writers often use the Orient as a locale.*
- 9) Streets, building, parks and companies.
- 10) Organizations and other groups, for instance: *Columbia University, Department of Commerce, etc.*

⁴³*Ibid.*, pp. 107-108.

⁴⁴*Ibid.*, p. 109.

⁴⁵*Ibid.*

⁴⁶*Ibid.*, p. 110.

⁴⁷*Ibid.*

11) Noun and pronouns refers to God and Sacred must be capitalized, for example:

*Allah is our God.*⁴⁸

12) Events, eras, prizes, and documents, e.g. *The Nobel Prize for literature was won by Saul Below in 1976.*⁴⁹

13) Titles of the following matters:

- a) Civil and military titles, i.e. *The Secretary of State is generally the most important person of...*
- b) Academic degrees, e.g. *Suryana, M. Ed.*
- c) Books, plays, and periodicals, i.e. *The House of Seven Gables* (Name of a book).⁵⁰

From the explanation we can draw a conclusion that we use capital letter in a matter such as a name of a person, a place, a company, a title of civil and military, academic degree, a name of events, documents, etc.

The fourteen types of punctuation marks above are the common punctuation marks that are usually applied in a written or printed media that we face in our daily life. A misused application of those punctuation marks will make our written language difficult to be understood by other. Hence, we must pay more attention on the use of punctuation marks which sometimes are still less considered by some people.

B. Errors in Language Learning

1. Definition

Error can be defined as a departure from correctness, a mistaken belief.⁵¹ It also can be defined as a misconception of result from incorrect information.⁵² In oxford advanced learner's dictionary, an error is described as the state of being wrong in belief or behavior.⁵³ In learning

⁴⁸*Ibid.*, p. 114.

⁴⁹*Ibid.*

⁵⁰*Ibid.*

⁵¹Arthur Rebber and Emily Rebber, *The Penguin Dictionary of Psychology*, (London: Penguin Books Ltd., 2001), 3rd Ed., p. 249.

⁵²*Ibid.*

⁵³AS Hornby, *op.cit.*, p. 390.

language process, an error can be defined as a deviation from the norm of the target language. It can be in grammatical, syntactical, phonological, morphological rules, etc.⁵⁴

From the definitions above, it can be concluded that error is a mistaken believe or a departure from correctness as a result of getting incorrect information.

2. Identification and Description of Errors

In learning language, to be able to identify an error, we need to know about the difference of error and mistake to maintain our understanding. An error takes place when the deviation arises as a result of lack of knowledge.⁵⁵ It represents a lack of comprehension of information or knowledge. A learner cannot self-correct an error because it is a product reflective of their current stage of L2 development. Meanwhile, a mistake occurs when learners fail to perform their competence. It is the result of processing problems that prevent learners from accessing their knowledge of a target knowledge rule and cause them to fall back on some alternative, non-standard rule that they find easier to access.⁵⁶ Learners can readily self-correct their mistakes.

The way teachers deal with students' errors depend basically on their own beliefs on the nature of the learning process and awareness of students' need and the objective of the course or lesson.⁵⁷ An ability to develop rapport and create a positive classroom atmosphere will guide the foreign language teacher in dealing with students' errors.⁵⁸ Teachers should be able to recognize their students' competence as well to maintain correction feed back to them.

⁵⁴Rod Ellis, *The Study of Second Language Acquisition*, (Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 51.

⁵⁵*Ibid.*

⁵⁶*Ibid.*

⁵⁷David Nunan and Clarice Lamb, *The Self-Directed Teacher: Managing The Learning Process*, (Cambridge University Press, t.t.), p. 68.

⁵⁸*Ibid.*

The description of learner errors involves a comparison of the learner's idiosyncratic utterances with a reconstruction of those utterances in the target language. It requires, therefore, attention to the surface properties of the learners' utterances.⁵⁹ Dulay, Burt and Krashen distinguish the errors into three types according to their systematicity those are:

- a. Pre-systematic errors occur when the learner is unaware of the existence of a particular rule in the target language, for instance, about the importance of punctuation marks.
- b. Systematic errors occur when the learner has discovered a rule but it is the wrong one.
- c. Post-systematic errors occur when the learner knows the correct target language rule but uses it inconsistently (i.e. the learner makes a mistake on the use of punctuation on their writing).⁶⁰

The main point to be able to maintain error correction of the criteria that are mentioned by Dulay, Burt, and Krashen is a teacher should know and pay more attention on his or her students' competence in learning the target language.

C. Source of Errors

Taylor points out, the error source can be psycholinguistic, sociolinguistic, epistemic, or may reside in the discourse structure. Psycholinguistic sources concern with the nature of the L2 knowledge system and the difficulties that the learners have in applying it in production the target language. Sociolinguistic source involve such matters as the learners' ability to adjust their knowledge in accordance with the social context. Epistemic source concerns with the learners' lack of world knowledge, while discourse sources involve problems in the organization of information into a coherent text.⁶¹

⁵⁹Rod Ellis, *op.cit.*, p. 54.

⁶⁰*Ibid.*, p. 56.

⁶¹*Ibid.*, pp. 57-58.

Richard distinguishes sources or causes of competence errors into three:

1. Interference errors (interlingual) occur as a result of the use of elements from one language while speaking or writing another. For example, Indonesian learners often encounter an error to differentiate the use of comma instead of full stop of numbers in English, i.e. *0,64 cm* (it should be 0.64 cm) and *1.500 km* (it must be 1,500km).
2. Intralingual errors reflect the general characteristic of rule learning such as faulty generalization, incomplete application of rules and failure to learn conditions under which rules applied.
3. Developmental errors occur when the learner attempts to build up hypothesis about the target language on the basis of limited experience.⁶²

Intralingual error is further subdivided by Richard into the following categories:

1. Overgeneralization errors arise when the learner creates a deviant structure on the basis of other structure in the target language. It generally involves the creation of one deviant structure in place of two target language structure, i.e. *He is a singer (,)(.)* where English allows *He is a singer(.)*.
2. Ignorance of rule restriction involves the application of rules to context where they do not apply, e.g. *Where will you go!* (the learner intends to ask) is the wrong pattern. The correct pattern is *Where will you go?* By using question mark.
3. Incomplete application of rules involves a failure to fully develop a structure of the target language, e.g. *Do you like singing* (the writer intends to ask but he or she doesn't place question mark to indicate question sentence). Therefore, he or she should write *Do you like singing?*.

⁶²*Ibid.*

4. False concepts hypothesized arise when the learner doesn't fully comprehend a distinction in the target language, e.g. *It is about 4,2 km* (in English the correct form should be *It is about 4.2 km*).⁶³

From the explanations above, it can be summarized that source of errors in language learning involved psycholinguistic, sociolinguistic, epistemic, and discourse structure. Meanwhile, the sources of competence errors involve interlingual, intralingual and developmental errors. An emphasizing point of this explanation is a foreign language teacher must be able to classify source of errors of language learners as a support for ease to maintain correction and to give feedback to the students.

D. Factors Influence errors

1. Internal

The internal factors that influence learner errors in learning language covers the condition of the learner, the manifestation of language transfer, and the cognitive accounts of SLA.

a. The Condition of The Learner

The condition of the learners, whether physic or psychology, will affect their ability in learning a new language. Factor such as: age, motivation, mental health, attitude, aptitude, personality of the learners play important rule in this case. For example, the relationship between a learner's age and his or her potential for success in learning a new language is mostly debated by linguistic researcher.⁶⁴

Hence, a teacher in designing a course material must consider the learners conditions and needs in order to be easy on delivering material of the target language.

⁶³*Ibid.*, p. 59.

⁶⁴Patsy M. Lightbown and Nina Spada, *How Language Are Learned*, (Oxford University Press, 1999), 2nd Ed., p. 60.

b. The Manifestation of Language Transfer

Errors occur as a result of the negative transfer of mother tongue patterns into the learner's L2.⁶⁵ Three things that should be considered in this case those are: facilitation, avoidance and over-use.

Facilitation is evident not so much in the total absence of certain errors- as would be expected on the basis of behaviorist notions of positive transfer-but rather in a reduced number of errors and, also, in the rate of learning. The learners' L1 can facilitate L2 learning. This is called by facilitative effect. Learners may sometimes pass through an early stage of development where they manifest correct use of target language feature if the feature corresponds to an L1 feature and then, subsequently, replace it with a developmental L2 feature before finally returning to the correct target language feature.⁶⁶

Avoidance deals with learners' avoidance in using linguistic structures which they find difficult to apply because of differences of their native language and the target language. Learners tend to pay less attention in those difficulties to minimize errors in learning a language. for instance, in writing case, we tend to write everything simply because we are afraid of doing mistake.⁶⁷

Over-use or over-indulgence of certain grammatical form in L2 acquisition can occur as a result of intralingual process such as overgeneralization.⁶⁸

To minimize errors because of the manifestation of a negative language transfer, a teacher should be careful in designing his or her material. An inappropriate or unsuitable design material will cause language learners hard to understand it. Finally, many errors are encountered by students in mastering the target language.

⁶⁵Rod Ellis, *op.cit.*, pp. 301-302.

⁶⁶*Ibid.*, p. 303.

⁶⁷*Ibid.*, p. 304.

⁶⁸*Ibid.*, p. 305.

c. The Cognitive Account of SLA

The cognitive accounts of SLA also influence learner errors in learning language. The cognitive accounts concern with what learners' know not with what learners do. Clearly, the focus is not on abstract linguistic knowledge but on the extent to which the learner has achieved mastery over the formal and functional properties of language and the mental process which is involved.⁶⁹

Consciousness of the learner in language learning is another factor deals with students' error related with this cognitive accounts. Schmidt distinguishes three sense of consciousness into consciousness as awareness, consciousness as intention and consciousness as knowledge.⁷⁰

From the definitons above it can be concluded that the cognitive account of SLA deals with students competence in mastering the L2 or the target language. It concerns to what a learner knows not to what he or she does.

2. External

The learner-external errors factors in learning language are primarily concerned with the question "How do learners get information about the target language?". The external factors focus on social, input and interaction factors.

a. Social Factors

The process of language learning can be very stressful, and the impact of positive or negative attitudes from the surrounding society can be critical. One aspect that has received particular attention is the relationship of gender roles to language achievement.⁷¹

Community attitudes toward the language that is being learned can also have a profound impact. Where the community has a broadly

⁶⁹*Ibid.*, p. 348.

⁷⁰*Ibid.*, p. 361.

⁷¹Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, "Second Language Acquisition", http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second_language_acquisition, cited on January 12, 2010.

negative view of the target language and its speakers, or a negative view of its relation to them, learning is typically much more difficult. This finding has been confirmed by research in numerous contexts. A widely-cited example is the difficulty faced by Indonesian learners in learning English as a second language.

b. Input

Learners' most direct source of information about the target language is the target language itself. When they come into direct contact with the target language, this is referred to as *input*. When learners process that language in a way that can contribute to learning, this is referred to as *intake*.⁷²

Input in language learning can be distinguished into three theories those are:

- 1) Behaviorist theory proposes a direct relationship between input and output. This theory rejects the idea of mind as an object for inquiry and ignores the internal processing that takes places inside the learner. Input is comprised with stimuli and feedback.
- 2) Mentalist theory emphasizes the importance of the learners' *black box*. This theory focuses on learners' innate knowledge.
- 3) Interactionist theory concern with the linguistic environment and social interaction pattern.⁷³

So, there are three major theories concern with *input* in language learning those are: behaviourist, mentalist and interactionist theory. To maintain errors correction to language learners we also can consider this point, of course, as a supporting point to other.

c. Interaction Pattern

Long's interaction hypothesis proposes that language acquisition is strongly facilitated by the use of the target language in

⁷²*Ibid.*

⁷³Rod Ellis, *op.cit.*, p. 243.

interaction.⁷⁴ The way learners interact to the environment around them will influence their understanding toward the target language. Interaction pattern of language learners can be in form of learner and learner's interaction, learner and teacher's interaction; learner, material and method's interaction; and learner and environment interaction.

E. Previous Research

Previous research of related study had been conducted by Novi Sulistiyana (Student of IKIP PGRI Semarang), she analyzed about the ability of student to use punctuation in writing in SMK Pelita Nusantara Semarang I.⁷⁵

This thesis and Novi's research has similarity. Both of them focus on punctuation marks. There is no difference on it.

The difference between this thesis and Novi's research was Novi's research was generally on writing. She was not specified her study in what type of writing she analyzed but this thesis was specified its scope on the use of punctuation marks in dialogue text in order to limit the study. Besides that, the object of the study of Novi's research and this research was different as well.

The second was the research that had been conducted by Tutik Widayani (2201403506) (student of English department and art faculty semarang state university). She analyzed about error analysis on students' punctuation in writing dialogue text (a case study on the second year students of SLTPN I Doplang Blora in the academic year of 2007/2008).⁷⁶

⁷⁴Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, "Second Language Acquisition", http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second_language_acquisition, cited on January 12, 2010.

⁷⁵Novi Sulistiyana, "The Ability of Students to Use Punctuation Marks in Writing in SMK Pelita Nusantara I in The Academic Year of 2007/2008", Thesis of Faculty of Languages and Arts IKIP PGRI Semarang, (Semarang: Library of IKIP PGRI Semarang, 2007).

⁷⁶Tutik Widayani, "Errors Analysis on Students' Punctuation (A CaseStudy on The Second Year Students of SLTPN I Doplang in The Academic Year of 2007/2008", Thesis of Faculty of Languages And Arts Semarang State University, (Semarang: Library of Semarang State University, 2008).

Although they have the same focuses, our participants and place of conducting the research was quite different.

The thesis under the title teaching writing discussion text in seventh grade of SMA Saverius Sragen in the academics year of 2007/2008 by Yohana Dwiyogi Punicawari (2201403005) (student of English department and art faculty Semarang state university) also used as reference for previous research because discussion was nearly the same with dialogue.⁷⁷ Unfortunately, this thesis didn't explain about the use of punctuation marks, this is the differences between this thesis and Yohana's research.

Based on description above, then the researcher was interested to formulate his research by using title "Analyzing Students' Awareness of Using Appropriate Punctuation Marks in Dialogue Text (A Descriptive Study at Eighth Grade Students of MTs Darul Ulum Semarang in The Academic Year of 2009/2010)" because this study is quite different on time, place, focus, participants, methods and results. This study may give us new perspectives toward the importance of being aware of using appropriate punctuation marks in writing especially in dialogue text.

⁷⁷Yohana Dwi Yogi Punicawari, "Teaching Writing Discussion Text in Seventh Grade of SMA Saverius Sragen in The Academic Year of 2007/2008", Thesis of Faculty of Languages And Arts Semarang State University, (Semarang: Library of Semarang State University, 2008).